



UMass Amherst Outreach UMass  
Extension

# Healthy Fruit

Volume 15, 2007

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Program

## Healthy Fruit, Issue 17, September 18, 2007

[http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy\\_fruit/](http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy_fruit/)

### **Apple Maturity Report**

I don't see too much out of the ordinary as the 2007 apple harvest progresses. The weather is decent and most orchards got some much needed rain last week -- 3+ inches in Belchertown -- so that has reduced the stress on trees a bit. Macs, Gala, and Honeycrisp treated with ReTain have responded very well to the treatment, although Macs are starting to loosen and drop. ReTain has been very effective at keeping Honeycrisp on the trees, and has nearly halted maturity development in Gala. Gala not treated with ReTain are 5-6 on the SI scale, vs. 4 for ReTain-treated Gala.

Back on July 31 in Issue 14 of Healthy Fruit I predicted the end of McIntosh harvest (for Belchertown for CA storage) to be September 20. This was based on a model that factors bloom date and the average daily temperature for 30 days after bloom. I think it is right on this year, as Macs here have reached SI values of 5-6, which is at the end of where you want to be for fruit destined for long-term CA storage. Of course Mac fruit can still be picked for short-term storage and immediate sale until they are all gone. Recent cool weather has helped color development, which was a bit lacking until recently.

I was up in the Champlain Valley last week and even there color was not as good as I would like to see it. The pickable crop was heavy though, except in the quite a few orchards that had hail damage. Vermont and New Hampshire seem to have suffered the brunt of hail this year, although a few Massachusetts orchards also had some. Overall, I understand the New England apple crop looks pretty good and harvest is going like gang-busters now especially since we have gotten some cooler weather.

Elsewhere, the lower Hudson Valley has a good crop of apples (they did not have as much of a dry spell in August as we did) and is generally about 4-5 days ahead of us; Western New York has a very good crop; the southeast (south of PA) and lower midwest in particular suffered from the Easter freeze and have light crops; Michigan has a good crop but harvest and maturity are early, with some varieties apparently out of 'normal order' because of the weather? The Washington apple crop is large (120+ million bushels) but overall the U.S. apple crop is 'moderate and manageable' according to industry sources. It should be a decent marketing year.

A reminder that most Honeycrisp are ready to pick now having achieved SI values of 5 or above. Unfortunately there is no real good way to judge Honeycrisp maturity on the tree, so you have to go by color (if you have it) and taste. By now even green fruit are probably ready to go. Honeycrisp can still be stored at this stage, however, it is recommended that you keep the fruit at ambient temperature (cool, not in the sun) for a couple days after harvest before putting in cold storage. This is to prevent soft scald which can be a problem with this apple.

Below are some results of recent maturity testing from apples at the UMass Cold Spring Orchard in Belchertown. I have not looked at Cortland or Empire yet -- I expect to by the end of this week or early next week. Note that Gala with no ReTain are being or have been harvested already, however, the ReTain-treated Gala are still on the trees and in fine condition. Mac harvest should be wrapping up this week into early next week. Note that I also publish apple maturity testing results on the UMass Fruit Advisor here:

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/2007apple/index.html>

And I publish updates and general ramblings about harvest and other orchard happenings on my blog:

- <http://jmcextman.blogspot.com>

J. Clements

date	variety	drop	size (in.)	color (%red)	firmness (lb.)	soluble solids	starch index	taste	disorders	comments
15-Sep	Redmax McIntosh	very few	3.1	85	16.2	13	5.5	good	some insect	1/2 rate ReTain on these trees; very nice, complete harvest
17-Sep	Honeycrisp (ReTain)	very few	3.2	35	14.5	12	5	very good	touch of rot	1/2 rate ReTain on these trees; cannot use color to judge maturity
17-Sep	Buckeye Gala	none	2.9	90	17	12	3.9	getting there, ready for 1st pick	rosy apple aphid	1/2 rate ReTain on these trees has notably delayed maturity

### ***New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference slated for December 11,12,13***

The New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference, which is now co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association, is scheduled for December 11,12 and 13, 2007 at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH. There will be four tree fruit sessions: Stone Fruit on the afternoon of December 11, and morning and afternoon Apple sessions on December 12. In addition, there will be a special Organic Apple session on the morning of December 11. Please make plans to attend this premier meeting for fruit and vegetable growers in New England. For more information, visit the Conference website:

- [http://www.newenglandvfc.org/about\\_the\\_conference.html](http://www.newenglandvfc.org/about_the_conference.html)

J. Clements

### ***The 2008 Apple Crop Insurance Program***

I know it is awful difficult to think about right now, but the deadline for signing up for apple (or peach) crop insurance for the 2008 growing season is November 20, 2007. Every grower should give some thought to purchasing at least the basic level of CAT coverage, and for many of you upgrading to 'buy-up' or AGR enhanced levels of coverage makes sense. Given the amount of hail we had in the region

this year, and predictions for weather to only get more dramatic, crop insurance is the one risk management strategy that every grower should adopt. Please see the attached document “The 2008 Apple Crop Insurance Program” by Jeremy Forreth of Crop Growers LLP.

J. Clements

### **Greenhouse Tomato Conference November 13**

University of Massachusetts Extension, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System, University of Rhode Island Extension and Northeast SARE are sponsoring a “Greenhouse Tomato Conference” to be held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA on **Tuesday, November 13, 2007**.

This all day conference will address topics of interest to both the beginner and more experienced greenhouse tomato growers. Among the speakers at the conference are: Freek Knol, from De Ruiter Seeds who will be speaking on *Choosing Varieties of Tomatoes for Greenhouse Production* and *Reading Your Plants: Managing Plant Vigor in Grafted Crops*. Richard McAvoy from the University of Connecticut will be speaking on *Nutrient and Water Management*, Carol Glenister, from IPM Laboratories in Locke, NY will be speaking on *Using Biological Control for Greenhouse Tomatoes*, Sharon Douglas from the CT Agricultural Experiment Station will be speaking on *Disease Identification and Management*. John Howell from the New England Vegetable Growers Association will be speaking on *Cause and Management of Plant Disorders*. There will also be a Grower Panel and a *Hands-on Grafting Workshop*.

A pre- registration fee of \$35.00 is due by **November 7th**. If postmarked after November 7th, the fee is \$40.00 per person. Seating is limited, so please register early!

Please make checks payable to the University of Massachusetts and mail to: Greenhouse Tomato Program, Room 203 French Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. Cost of admission includes: handouts, lunch, snacks and beverages during break. Three pesticide recertification credits will be offered for attendees from CT, RI, MA, ME, NH and VT (pending state approval).

**For more information see:** [http://www.umass.edu/umext/floriculture/upcoming\\_events.html](http://www.umass.edu/umext/floriculture/upcoming_events.html) or

#### **Contact:**

**In Massachusetts:** Tina Smith, University of Massachusetts, 413-545-5306, [tsmith@umext.umass.edu](mailto:tsmith@umext.umass.edu)

**In Connecticut:** Leanne Pundt, University of Connecticut, 860-626-6240, [leanne.pundt@uconn.edu](mailto:leanne.pundt@uconn.edu)

*Note: Healthy Fruit is now on a once every (app.) two weeks publication schedule. The next (and last for 2007) HF will be published in early to mid-October with a post-harvest roundup*

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**The 2008 Apple Crop Insurance Program**  
“Protecting Your Capital Investment”  
By: Jeremy Forrett of Crop Growers LLP

**Sales Closing Date: November 20, 2007 for the 2008 crop year**

When it comes to protecting the capital investment of an apple orchard, growers must explore all of the available options. The Federal Crop Insurance Program has many options such as, Buy-up coverage, Unit Structure and the Fresh Option. With the changing weather patterns you owe it to yourself to explore these options.

**Apple Quality Options**

**Fresh Option**

This option takes into account quantity and QUALITY of your apples. If 50% of your apples do not grade U.S. Fancy due to a covered peril it is a 70% loss. If 65% of your apples do not grade U.S. Fancy due to a covered peril it is a 100% loss. **You must discuss with the adjuster what you can do with the fruit after it has been adjusted for this option. Failure to do so can adversely affect the outcome of your claim. Sales records must be maintained by unit!**

**Apple Crop Insurance Established Price Per Bushel:**

**Massachusetts:**

**Fresh:**                \$13.95 maximum                \$7.67 catastrophic

**New Hampshire:**

**Fresh:**                \$13.25 maximum                \$7.29 catastrophic

**Connecticut:**

**Fresh:**                \$13.95 maximum                \$7.67 catastrophic

**Buy-up coverage levels:** You can choose how much of your production history you would like to guarantee, from 50% to 75%, at 100% of the established price.

**Government subsidy**

The percentage the government pays of your premium.

Coverage Level	50/55	50/100	55/100	60/100	65/100	70/100	75/100
Federal Subsidy	100%	67%	64%	64%	59%	59%	55%
Your Portion of Premium	0%	33%	36%	36%	41%	41%	45%

**Unit Structure**

You are able to divide your orchard into optional units if, for each optional unit you have different Farm Serial Numbers or your orchard consists of non-contiguous land. Also, you must be able to supply production records based on this unit structure

**Catastrophic coverage (CAT):** Provides a 50% production guarantee with losses paid at 55% of the Federal Crop Insurance maximum indemnity price, cost is \$100 per crop per county. **No consideration for loss of grade.** Apples grading U.S. #1 Processing or better whether harvested or left on the tree will count as production.

**Don't Forget To Ask Your Agent How To Insure Your Peaches and Pears!**

**This fact sheet is a general overview and should not take the place of the Crop Provisions and/or Special Provisions.**